

SMOKEY BEAR'S SAFE CAMPFIRE

Objectives:

- Describe the rules for building a safe campfire.
- Describe how grownups can safely extinguish fires.

Activity:

Discuss the rules for a safe campfire.

Grades:

K-3

Group:

Whole group

Materials:

optional: bucket



optional: sticks

**Instructions:**

Talk about the rules for a safe campfire. Children should know that *only* grownups may build and put out fires. A grownup should always keep watch over the fire, too. But children can know and encourage grownups to follow the rules for a safe campfire. And children can help grownups by clearing a circle of safety, gathering kindling, or carrying water.

To act out the rules for a safe campfire, have all the children sit in a circle on the floor. Make the circle 10 feet across, the diameter of the cleared circle of safety around any campfire. Then stand in the center of the circle. Using sticks as props, pretend you are about to build a fire. Ask the children what else you need to do to build a safe campfire. Encourage them to suggest safety rules as well, such as checking for a level site, clearing away leaves and twigs, and having water handy. Ask them, "What am I forgetting?" until they mention all the safety rules.

When it is time to put out the fire, remind the children that grownups must do this job, not children. Ask them to tell you how to put it out correctly. After pretending to pour water on the flames, say "I still see a little steam" or "Listen, it's still sizzling." It may take several dousings and stirrings to be sure a fire is "out cold"!

Smokey Bear's Safe Campfire Rules

Lots of people use outdoor fires for cookouts and camping. Everyone can help Smokey protect forests, parks, and other outdoor places by learning campfire safety. Here are some rules for a safe campfire:

1. Help a grownup pick an open, level spot for the campfire.
2. Help check for overhanging tree branches.
3. Help clear away dry leaves, twigs, and grass to make a 10-foot circle of safety around the campfire.
4. Have water handy before starting the fire!
5. Have a grownup start the fire.
6. Remind the grownup to add one stick at a time to control the size of the fire.
7. Remember that running and playing near the campfire is unsafe!
8. Be sure a grownup is always watching the fire.

When it's time to put out a campfire, be sure it's out!

1. Have a grownup sprinkle water over all parts of the fire and gently stir the remains of the fire.
2. Be sure the grownup sprinkles water and stirs again until all steaming and sizzling have stopped. Help by looking and listening!
3. Remind the grownup never to leave a fire until he or she is sure it is out cold!

